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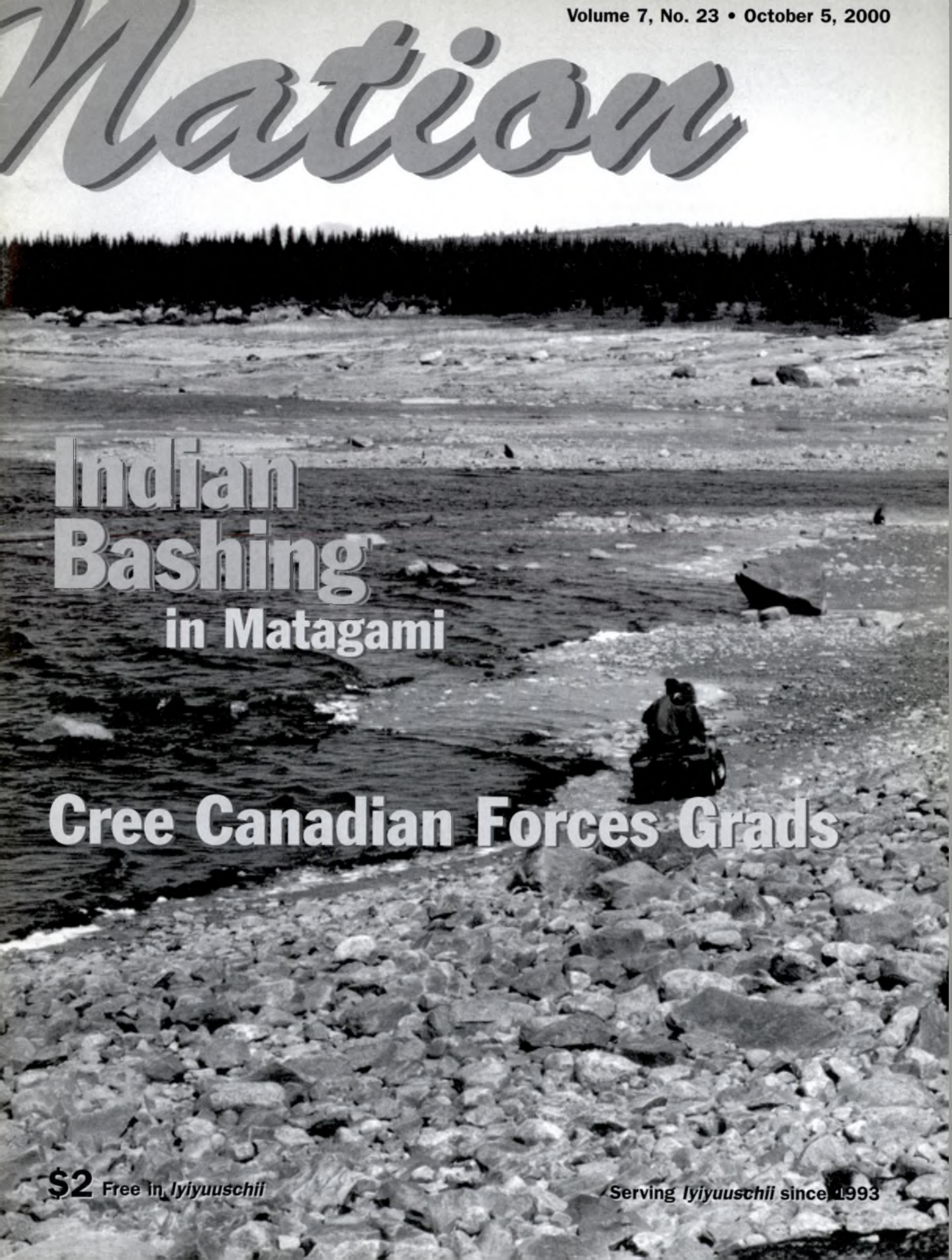
Nation



Indian Bashing in Matagami

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Got a surprise for all of you. Not all journalist and publishers are honest. I can hear the cries of dismay and shock all the way to my desk.
But seriously folks, we have to once again warn all of our clients and readers about advertisements.
Some magazines or newspapers send out a bill to you. Sometimes it might even be with what we call a tear sheet. A tear sheet is the page of the magazine of newspaper with "you ad" on it. You don't know who requested the ad. In truth you may not have requested the ad at all. These types of companies depend on you not checking or verifying that you did want the ad. Most accounting departments will pay the bill without checking to closely. That's what they want.
The latest one I heard of was a logo, the name of the Band and a wrong number... nothing else.
Who in their right mind would want something like that. It says nothing and means nothing but a bill for $700 was sent along with it. They want that.
All you have to do is request a copy of your purchase order or contract with the correct authorized name and signature on it. Say you will not pay otherwise. Legally you are not bound to pay for unsolicited advertisements put in any news media on your behalf without your consent.
If it were otherwise *the Nation* would've attempted to bankrupt Hydro-Quebec a long time ago. Come to think of it there would be a few Quebec government departments and ministries that would be looking at budgetary problems right now but that's another story.
In any case if you are unsure about what to do, please feel free to phone the Nation at 1-514-272-3077 and ask for Will. It would be my pleasure to assist you in any way that I could. If this happens to you, then give us a call so we can warn others about what is happening and who is doing it. We'll assist in the investigation if needed. We feel this is a community service we can offer and would gladly continue.
Remember to check all bills and take care.

by William Nicholls

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ON THE COVER
Somewher in Eeyou Istchee
Photographer: Neil Diamond
Cover Design: MONA LAVIOLETTE

AEZ NOTES
BUT BY THE ONE AND ONLY

This is a homage to those who attend meetings in places other than Cree communities. I decided to dedicate my participation in this issue to those poor unfortunate wretches whom we rarely see in communities, those who must travel, travel and travel continuously just to attend meetings, go to boring conferences and any other (official or unofficial) business.

I've sat down on the crapper after my numerous coffee breaks have given me diarrea verbal and otherwise and wrote a song for you poor wandering souls. Worry not, for in my research I found out that you aren't sent out merely because nobody wants to see your face in the Cree communities, you aren't sent out because you're considered valuable for your party animal skills (except for...) at meetings, in short at times you aren't being sent out for any reason at all. This song is dedicated to you and should be sung to Rod Stewarts megahit "Do Ya Think I'm Sexy?"

Do Ya Think I'm Busy?

Do ya think I'm busy?
Gotta get my money
Gotta catch a plane, soon...

Some days, it gets a little blurry,
That's because I'm in such a hurry,
Gotta end, this meeting, soon...

Do ya think I'm busy
Gotta spend ma money
Gotta win tonight (in the casino), soon

Come morning, waiting for a quorum,
Where's the chair, to get moving
That's OK, we'll defer until tomorrow,
Just so long, as my expenses are good...

Do ya think I'm busy
As I watch my movie
In my expensive hotel room

Don't worry, we'll decide soon
Who'll get the money and who'll lose it too
Just so long as I raise my hand
And second that motion too....

Do ya think I'm busy
Spending all ma money
Win or lose, at casino royale....

Do ya think I'm busy
Gotta get more money
Gotta catch a plane soon.

Say, who's this?
Oh, it's just my family
Didn't know that my baby turned two

Do ya think I'm busy
Gatta do ma claim now,
Gotta get back on the plane soon...

Wow, stuff you can come up with but there are some strange coincidences you notice going through life whenever there are large groups of people doing the conference thang. Here's the short list ($9.99 will get you the long list, great to read on long plane rides.):

-the opening speech is often lengthy and promising, and is either tear jerking, inspirational and pleasing, yet has nothing to do with the conference...

-no matter how many times we take "crisis management workshops' it never sinks in until it's too late...

-the bar is the only places deals are made, then forgotten...

-you never call the person who gives you their business card and never see them until the next crisis management workshop next year...

-conferences on taxes get the most attendance even though we don't have to pay taxes...

-reports on the conferences are usually photocopies of the agenda...

-the best part of the conference is the closing ceremony dinner and party...

-the most important business is conducted before boarding time, when you've only got one minute....

And I'm outta time, do ya think I'm busy???

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Nation

"Indian-bashing" erupts at logging meet

Non-Native mayors and forestry officials unleashed a racist tirade against Crees at a meeting in Matagami to discuss logging on Sept. 22, according to reports.

"It was interestingly shocking. It was quite disturbing," said Romeo Saganash, the Cree negotiator with Quebec, who attended the meeting.

The meeting was organized by the Quebec government to inform non-Native northerners about the latest negotiations on forestry with the Crees.

It came just two days after Quebec's most recent offer, which Crees are already saying isn't much of an improvement over what Quebec was offering last year.

The mayors and mill heads didn't like Quebec's proposal to set aside a percentage of jobs in forestry for Crees, according to one source. "They didn't like Crees getting jobs," he said.

Crees hold less than 1 percent of jobs in forestry in a region where they make up 40 to 45 percent of the population.

Hardly anyone present in the room dissented from the anti-Cree onslaught. In the face of the tirade, the government officials reportedly didn't bother defending the Crees. Instead, they promised to put a local representative on a proposed forestry authority, which would issue cutting permits in Iyiyuuschii.

The authority would have equal representation from Crees and Quebec.

Sam Etapp, head of the Cree forestry campaign, expressed dismay about the "Indian bashing" in Matagami. "I'm not surprised by that type of reaction. Generally they have always had a racist attitude to Natives. They've always tried to undermine and marginalize the Crees," he said.

Lebel-sur-Quévillon Mayor Gérald LeMoyne, who reportedly was critical of Crees, was out hunting and could not be reached for comment. He is an employee at the forestry giant Domtar, which is Waswanipi's joint-venture partner in the Nabakatuk sawmill.

Other mayors and Quebec officials also could not be reached.

On Sept. 25, Grand Chief Ted Moses met with Cree chiefs and his forestry advisors to discuss Quebec's latest offer. They told the Cree negotiators to go back and get a better deal.

"It's not significantly different from last year's offer," said Etapp. "There is a slight increase in the monetary offer, but otherwise everything is the same."

Quebec is still balking at one of the main Cree demands – that the deal be a complementary agreement to the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. This would protect it from arbitrary changes by future governments.

The Sept. 30 deadline for a deal is fast approaching. Etapp said he wasn't hopeful about a last-minute deal. "Personally I am not too confident," he said.

Etapp refused to release the dollar value of the latest Quebec offer or of last year's offer while negotiations continue. Another source said the two offers are only about $500,000 apart. In the latest offer, Quebec has proposed to set up a $10-million economic-development fund, which would provide compensation to trappers and hunters for past forestry damages.

by Alex Roslin

International turtle of mystery

I walked off the plane at the Chibougamau airport and heard Paul Dixon's familiar greeting: "Welcome to James Bay."

But waiting in his truck was an unfamiliar sight... a turtle! The Dixons had found the little guy hitchhiking on Route 113 about 25 kilometres east of Senneterre.

"I could clearly see the turtle (on the road), but I couldn't believe it. There was this huge turtle going across the highway. It was like winning the Loto 6/49," said Paul.

With his keen trapper's instincts, Paul knew this was no ordinary turtle. For one thing, the pet turtles common in Waswanipi are only a few inches long.

The turtle out for a stroll on the road was much bigger, 11 inches long and eight inches wide.

The animal was immediately welcomed into the family and the community of Waswanipi. "We just let it walk around the house. It was living like a king. Automatically it was part of the family," said Paul.

The turtle was showered with all sorts of nicknames, but one that stuck was Whopper. "He reminded us of a burger," explained Paul. "People would stop me on the road and ask when were we going to cook it. I was tempted when someone said there are seven kinds of meats inside a turtle," he joked.

But there was no way anyone was going to eat the little cutie. Everyone was in love with him. People of all ages came by the house to check out Whopper. "It was like a zoo," said Paul.

I asked if Whopper was allowed to meet some of his brother and sister turtles in the community. But this idea was nixed. There had been a previous bad experience when two turtles were introduced to each other and one bit the other on the head.

If dogs are a man's best friend, Whopper's best friend was the family dog. "Actually it was the dog that was the owner of the turtle. He loved it," said Paul.

see WHOPPER, page 9

Native Women's Shelter of Montreal

Aboriginal Wellness Gathering "Moving Towards the Seventh Generation"

The Native Women's Shelter of Montreal is proud to be hosting the Aboriginal Wellness Gathering entitled "Moving Towards the Seventh Generation" on October 27-29, 2000 in Montreal. The Gathering will be held at the Maritime Plaza Hotel, 1155 Guy Street.

Funding for this gathering and program services have come from the Aboriginal Healing Foundation.

The purpose of the gathering is "to inform and unite the urban community, to share information on our comprehensive program called Moving towards the Seventh Generation which focuses on multigenerational trauma and holistic healing.

Several First Nations guest speakers including:
Sakokwenenionkwas (Tom Porter): is a member of the Mohawk Nation of Akwesasne and now a resident of the newly founded Traditional Mohawk Community of Kanatsiohareke. In 1992, Tom received a Human Rights Award.

Billy Rogers: is a member of the Kiowa Nation in Oklahoma. Billy has degrees in Psychology and Public Health. He initiated the native wellness movement in the 1980's that annually draws thousands of native people to conferences in the United States and Canada.

Ernest Knockwood: is form the Mi'kmaq Nation from Eskoni First Nation. "I believe some of us are in the renewal era of our recovery from intergenerational trauma. One of our ancient Tribal was to connect our experiences and explain our reality – our path to recovery – was accomplished through story telling.

Suzy Goodleaf, M.Ed. Psychologist: is a member of the Mohawk Nation of Kahnawake. Her practice includes: Individual, Couple and Family Therapy Assessment and Consultation. Suzy Goodleaf will be our Key Note speaker for the gathering.

The Gathering will include ceremonies, such as Sweat lodges, Healing circles, Pipe ceremony and various workshops. We will also be hosting a banquet and a talent show, which will reflect the diversity, humor and strengths of a community moving towards Wellness.

Gathering Objectives

- Update the community on our "Moving Towards the Seventh Generation" program.
- Inform the community of the effects of the residential school system and multi-generational trauma.
- Obtain knowledge through teachings from our Elders. Promote healing.
- Obtain wellness skills, so that we may pass them onto the next seven generations.

Gathering Activities

- Native Women's Shelter of Montreal program update
- Sharing from women, men, and youth. Elders Teachings and workshops
- Pipe Ceremonies, Sweat Lodge Ceremony, Healing Circle
- Dinner Banquet and Talent Show
- Craft sales

For Gathering information please contact Nakuset at: Phone:(514) 933- 4688 Fax: (514) 933-5747 E-mail:nwsm@qc.aira.com. The registration fee of $20.00 will help cover the cost of Elder honorariums, child care and other Gathering costs. Banquet cost:$25.00
Hotel rooms are available for $109.00 per night at the Maritime Plaza hotel, for reservations call 1-800-363-6255 or e-mail at http://www.hotelmaritime.com

Ready to govern?

Coming this winter to a community near you is an opportunity to say what kind of Cree government you want.

The Cree Nation Government Working Group plans to hit the road and consult with Crees and Cree entities and businesses on what Iyiyuu governance should be.

Grand Chief Ted Moses says Cree governance can't be decided in an office someplace.

"We have to take it to the people," he said. "It's the only way we can take effective control of our future."

It's a future that Moses says deals with land, resources, language, culture and a way of life.

Moses sees the consultation process as developing an ever-changing master plan for cultural, social, economic, political, spiritual development, healing and de-colonization.

Moses said the new responsibilities and jurisdiction that Crees would be looking at taking on would need money.

Moses doesn't want government handouts, but sees revenue-sharing and direct taxing of resource-exploitation companies as the answer to financing the services and needs of Iyiyuuschii.

Moses sees this as exercising Cree rights and says it's time to take the federal and Quebec governments to task for failing in their fiduciary and treaty obligations to the Crees.

"The right of self-determination is an Aboriginal right. This has been determined by the United Nations and now it is up to Crees to determine the level of participation that we wish to have in that self-determination," said Moses.

Moses said that the Cree Nation would be looking at developing a Cree Nation constitution, what model of government Crees wished to pursue, what principles they wish to govern themselves by, a method of ensuring good relations with other nations and governments (Canada, Quebec and other First Nations) and how the Crees could contribute to healing the Earth, bettering humanity and helping world peace.

All of this stems out of a 1995 mandate that called for the establishment and development of a Cree Nation government that would have control, jurisdiction and authority over all areas of Iyiyuu governance in Iyiyuuschii.

In 1998, the Grand Council of the Crees created the Cree Nation Government Working Group to deal with this issue.

The plans are to have public meetings in all the communities and meetings with the band councils and leadership of Cree institutions like the Cree School Board, CTA, etc.

All the information would be gathered together and organized. The consultation process would also serve to educate as well as listen.

Moses said, "We need everyone's input to make this happen. The tallymen, Elders, youth, men, women and all our existing institutions. We need their help in nation-building because a nation is not just the leadership, it's everyone."

by William Nicholls

No to Nunavik Commission

Crees are reminding the Nunavik Commission studying Inuit self-government that Cree consent is needed before any new government structures can be created north of the 55th parallel or in the offshore islands.

The commission is working out the shape and content of Inuit self-government in northern Quebec. Its members were appointed by the Quebec and federal governments and from among the Inuit people.

Grand Chief Ted Moses and Whapmagoostui Chief David Masty made a joint presentation to the commission during hearings in Montreal.

The commission's jurisdiction includes land north of the 55th parallel, which includes many Cree traplines.

"Cree traditional territory not only overlaps with the territory of Nunavik in northern Québec, but also extends into the off-shore," says a Cree communiqué.

"The Cree leaders wish to underline that the Nunavik Commission does not represent the James Bay Cree people in any way whatsoever or for any purpose," it said.

Moses declared in the statement, "We did not participate in, or endorse in any way, the creation of the Commission."

The statement says the mandate and process of the Nunavik Commission are heavily biased against the James Bay Crees and Cree rights. "No Aboriginal peoples, other than Inuit, were accorded any role in negotiating the mandate or process of the commission," says the statement.

"This omission is astounding, since consultations are to be undertaken and recommendations made concerning Cree basic rights."

Fisheries raids Mi'kmaq

Fisheries officers wearing orange survival suits and night-vision goggles swooped into Miramichi Bay and made off with 97 Mi'kmaq lobster traps on Sept. 25, bringing the number of seized traps to 1,351.

The raid came just hours after reports of shots rang out over the waters of the bay for

see BRIEFS, page 9

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BRIEFS...

the third time in four days, abruptly ending an overnight fisheries operation.

Mi'kmaq Chief Wilbur Dedam has said that any efforts by either enforcement officers or non-Native fishermen to remove traps would be met with resistance until the community of Esgenoopetitj's lobster-fishing season ends Oct. 7.

"All our fishermen are doing is just trying to make a moderate livelihood and I'm not going to stop them," said Dedam in one newspaper report.

The dispute has turned violent in recent days. A non-Native boat was reportedly hit by a bullet on Sept. 22, while three non-Natives were arrested the next day after shots were fired from a boat.

The RCMP said one of the non-Native men was charged with careless use of a firearm and possession of a firearm dangerous to the public peace.

Colombians fear U.S. anti-drug fungus

Environmentalists and indigenous people in Colombia are worried about reports of a genetically modified fungus the United States has developed to fight its war on drugs.

The U.S. recently approved grants of $1 billion in military aid to Colombia to fight cocaine trafficking. Most of the funds are going to target the leftist guerrillas who control much of the southern part of the country.

Left untouched, many fear, will be the big cocaine barrons allied with far-right army-backed death squads.

The escalating war threatens to engulf Colombia in the next Vietnam and displace tens of thousands of peasants and indigenous people.

The genetically modified fungus is especially worrisome.

An Ecuadorian daily paper recently reported that 5,000 Colombian refugees had arrived in the country fleeing the war. An estimated 25,000 to 30,000 more were expected in the following weeks.

The wave of refugees is coming from the Putumayo region of Colombia, where massive doses of a U.S.-made pesticide glyphosate are being sprayed to destroy coca and poppy plantations.

WHOPPER...

"When we came around, he would pull his head in. But he would let the dog flip him upside down, and he would leave his head out so the dog would lick his head," he said.

One day Whopper had a close call. He was put in a box on the outside balcony. When no one was looking, he somehow climbed out, went to the stairs, tumbled down and landed on his back, righted himself and went for a walk in the grass.

"He started heading north," said Paul. A neighbour spotted a commotion in the yard when a bunch of dogs surrounded the turtle and started barking excitedly. But Whopper kept his cool.

"If we had a race between him and a rabbit, for sure I'd bet my house on the turtle," said Paul. "If he didn't beat the rabbit, he would definitely have eaten it."

The main question with Whopper was what to feed the little guy. The family got him three types of pet turtle food, including one jar that cost $22. He wouldn't eat it. They tried goldfish food, walleye, worms, carrots, lettuce, too. No luck.

Whopper didn't seem hungry, but he also kept up his excretions.

It dawned on Paul that the turtle was cleaning himself out in preparation for winter hibernation, like a bear. Paul wondered if Whopper was a lost pet, or if he should go back in the bush so he could hibernate.

After three weeks, Paul decided to take the turtle to the Chibougamau wildlife office to find out a little more about him.

A biologist there, Sylvie Beaudet, was very excited to see the animal. She conferred with colleagues in Quebec City and declared that it was extremely unusual to spot a turtle of Whopper's kind in northern Quebec.

A small population of this rare species, known as the Blanding's Turtle (Emydoidea blandingi for you Latin speakers), lives in the Hull area. Others are found around the Great Lakes, New England and Nova Scotia.

We also found out Whopper was a female, but her age wasn't determined. Blanding's Turtles can live to be over 70 years old. They live in lakes, ponds and wetlands with clean shallow water and mucky bottoms. Adults can reach two feet in length.

It was decided that the best course for Whopper was to put her back in the bush where she was found. A wildlife officer agreed to take her back to the highway near Senneterre.

"It was hard giving it away. Everyone got attached to it right away," said Paul sadly. "But we had to put it back in a natural setting so it could hibernate."

The Dixon family was given appreciation badges for its efforts to help the turtle.

The turtle's visit left a deep impression on the Dixons. Interestingly, Paul said he had wanted to find a turtle for many years.

The day after they left it with the wildlife people, the Dixon family had the good fortune of shooting two moose near their hunting camp.

Paul saw the moose as a good sign: "I got the feeling the turtle will be fine after this gift we had." **-ALEX ROSLIN**

There's no Such Word as Can't!

by **Deantha Edmonds**

Alvin Law was born without arms. Within an hour, his natural mother signed papers giving him up for adoption. Doctors told his adoptive parents that he would never be able to achieve anything, that his quality of life would be extremely poor. They were encouraged to place him in an institution. Instead, Alvin was raised in a home filled with love, spirituality, support, humor and the regular household chores.

His mother often tells the story of how she would prop his baby bottle up on pillows, Alvin nestled in his crib so he wouldn't roll over. One day she went to check on him, after hearing him giggling to himself. She found him laying in his crib on his back, the bottle between his feet, happily nursing away. Alvin doesn't remember learning to use his feet as we do our hands. He just always has. When it was his turn to wash the dishes, Alvin looked at his Mom and said, "How do I do that?" She replied, "How am I supposed to know? You figure it out!" He mowed the lawns, did the vacuuming, everything else his brothers and sisters did. He went to a regular school, played on the town's boys' baseball team, played trombone in the high school band, got his license to drive and amazed doctors everywhere.

With his strong family background and belief in himself, Alvin went to college and became a broadcaster. He plays the piano, the drums, participates in all types of sports, is a husband, a father, and he now tells his story to people all over the world as a professional motivational speaker. His speech is called "There's No Such Word as Can't!"

I had the pleasure to meet with Alvin Law for an interview after hearing him speak in Ouje-Bougoumou, where community members of all ages gave him a warm welcome, and were inspired by his enthusiasm for life.

Nation: Where are you from?

Alvin Law: Right now, we've just moved to Calgary. I spent the last 17 years in Regina, Saskatchewan. I spent the time previous to that in a couple of different places, but I was born and raised in a small community many would recognize in Saskatchewan as Yorkton and that's pretty much been my residence life. I travel, however, most of the school year doing these programs. Sometimes I figure I have an official residence but I tend to live on the road.

N: Thalidomide is the drug that your birth mother took, that caused you to be born without arms. Can you explain a little bit about this drug?

A.L.: There was a huge controversy in the early 60s about a morning sickness drug that deformed babies, primarily in Europe, then in Asia, and in Canada. It did not go to the United States, but essentially what the short version of the story is that it was a drug that was marketed to be so safe they thought that anybody, including pregnant women, could take it. Of course, it didn't work that way. What's really funny about the whole thing is that there was always a suggestion that this whole thing was a terrible thing. If you were born with this condition, whatever the deformity was, and the typical deformity was shortened limbs, essentially what the drug did was it didn't allow limbs to grow to their full length because of the shortening of the process. My arms strangely enough just didn't grow. It didn't affect my legs at all. So, you live with that sort of a stigma of being one of those Thalidomide babies. I think some people may be aware that there were a couple of documentaries done on it, about specifically actually myself and two or three other individuals. It depends on how you look at it. One of the joys that I find in travelling around doing this is saying to people, if you remember Thalidomide, you remember the babies, now here's an adult who doesn't have a problem with that. Having said that, I guess you could for sure consider the notion that it was a terrible time in our history. The legacy, I suppose, is that ever since about 1964, women have had a totally different attitude towards taking any kind of even suggested pharmaceuticals. Thalidomide was the legacy of changing that.

N: Is this drug still being prescribed?

A.L.: The drug is being used for clinical trials in the United States. It is in active use for treating leprosy in Brazil. What's really funny is that the drug itself wasn't maliciously produced. They didn't make this drug going "Huh, let's just hope pregnant women take it." It's so funny that this was probably one of the first drugs that had a major marketing campaign in the history of pharmaceuticals. The imagery back then was that it produced safe, sound sleep for everybody, even high risk patients, because their claim was, and they actually believed this was that it didn't have any side effects. The big oops was that they never tested it on a single female. Big surprise in the end that it would have this effect. In fact, they didn't start actually testing pharmaceuticals on women until after Thalidomide. They would actually just give the drugs to men, to male prisoners as a matter of fact, that's how they used to test drugs. So, when they gave it to women, they discovered that, big surprise, women's bodies are different than men's bodies.

He plays the piano, the drums, participates in all types of sports, is a husband, a father, and he now tells his story to people all over the world as a professional motivational speaker.

Thalidomide is the drug that your birth mother took, that caused you to be born without arms andthat was marketed to be so safe they thought that anybody, including pregnant women, could take it.

N: What is the warmest reaction you've had from a complete stranger meeting you?

A.L.: That's an excellent question. It was a reaction from what seemed to be a very old Islander in Antigua where my wife and I were vacationing a few years ago, who was watching as I opened the car door. We had gone shopping, and he was across the street sitting in an old chair and he came across. I had opened the door on the passenger side first for my wife and then as I was opening up the door for myself he came over and asked me, "What happened to you?" I answered that I was born this way. Whether it was just because this happened to be a human being who was very enlightened, his response to it was so unusual. Instead of it being, well that's too bad, he said, "Clearly you've been given other gifts." I said I guessed so. He introduced himself, and he asked who I was and he went to shake my hand. Unlike the reaction you get from some people where I would say, I'm sorry, I don't do that, he just extended his hand, and instead of it being a mistake, he just said, "There must be some way that you do this." So I reached up with my foot and I shook his hand. And then he said, "Now, this is how I would say hello," and he gave me a big hug. And then he asked permission - I couldn't believe he did this - to give my wife a hug. And he said to her, which surprised even my wife, although I'm sure she feels this way on occasion, "You're a very lucky woman." And he looked at me and said, "You're very lucky people, and welcome to my home." And he walked away.

It was an island reaction in some respects. But in many others I think that there are those who have gifts in all communities where they're able to see past what seems to be an obvious disadvantage, and I think most often these people probably have a strong spiritual side to them. It's not religious, it's spirituality. Having said that, I think that's where you get the opposite reaction. I think there are people who are very positive in that respect.

I actually had a woman come up to me not too long ago who, believe it or not, thought what I was doing was a terrible disservice to the community of disabled people, painting such a picture that everything is just rosy if you've got a good attitude, that we treat disabled people very poorly and that we have no respect and that I should stop making these tours because the reality of the situation is that disabled people are still living in a third world environment. That could be true in her situation, and it could be something very personal for her, but I have had that reaction on occasion. I think that where if there's any kind of deep sort of philosophical side as to why I do this, it's not to change the world. It's to work the percentages where if there's anyone out there could possibly use a bit of a bump up in their own attitude, it's the least I can do considering what I've had given to me. I think that's probably the one message that I try to give to the people who are on that border of acceptance of themselves, is that the biggest mistake that we make probably is looking for that acceptance in others before we get it together on our own.

"What happened to you?" I answered that I was born this way. Whether it was just because this happened to be a human being who was very enlightened, his response to it was so unusual.

N: You speak a lot about your childhood, your parents, your family home and environment. What is one of your favorite childhood memories?

A.L.: There are so many. I spent my winter, fall and spring in a town of about five or six thousand, which was an urban environment. But I spent my summers at a cabin. Even though my Mom and Dad were religious, and we went to church all the time, I think it was there that I was able to, and I hate this expression but I can't think of another one right now, but I communed with nature there. I was always outside. I was never in the cabin. I was out fishing, or walking around or exploring creeks, and I don't know if this was me or the environment, but I loved to feed the squirrels. They would actually come and sit on my knee and eat peanuts and sunflower seeds for a considerable length of time. I don't know what it was, but my Mom commented on it one time when I was younger and she said "You have a gift for being so gentle with pets and animals. If you could learn to be that way with people you'll be so much better off."

I think that's why I come up to communities like this one, communities in the North in particular: there is a way up here. And I think if we can somehow translate that way into also dealing with people that's a gift that we may not even recognize we have.

I was just at a bison conference, believe it or not, speaking at it with the likes of CNN's Ted Turner and afterwards the First Nations group from Northern Alberta presented Ted Turner with a buffalo skin and did a ceremony. I don't remember what it was called, but the essence of it was that anyone who helps provide for one of God's creatures is blessed with something extra. Somehow there was in that a message to me that the lake had taught me so much about myself. That if I can have this kind of connection with an animal that I don't even know, then I should worry less about the rejection of people. Because they're not as wise as the animals somehow.

My pets know where to come for a scratch. I'm sure they've learned it over time. My dog knows to bring the toys to my feet, where he knows to bring them to my wife in her lap. My cat knows to jump on my wife's lap for a cuddle but knows to come down by the bottom of the couch or the bed to cuddle with me.

N: How do you keep going when times are rough, when you're feeling bad, how do you continue to make these speeches? You must get bitter sometimes at having to, no, not having to because I know you want to do this, but what happens when you wake up in the morning and you just feel down, blue, and you know you have to go in front of a crowd of thousands and tell your story?

A.L.: One of my favorite expressions, and I've got a lot of them , is "Be careful what you wish for." I think that everyone has their own way of being validated somehow. I remember, (and this goes very straight to the point, and I never tell a story that really goes right to the point) my Dad's work, in particular. My Mom worked at home, she was a wonderful homemaker. It was very much a job, I don't view it as being women's work, in fact I never have. The fact that she didn't leave the house everyday was significant because my Dad did. He was a mechanic. I remember that this is kind of an interesting story, and I don't always tell this one either. One of my earliest memories of my childhood was going out during harvest and watching my Dad fix things, combines and tractors and trucks and having that ability to repair where others didn't have that ability. He wasn't doing anything that would make him rich or famous, he wasn't one of the socialites in town and he didn't have a fancy car, but he had so much respect from everybody. Everyone that knew my parents, my Dad in this case, never had a bad word to say about him. I felt he was doing something that had meaning to it, even though he was just fixing an engine. I'm not suggesting that a factory worker, or a person on an assembly line or even a garbage collector should ever fit into any particular category. As for what I do, I recognize that it's a job, but it's more than that. It's an ability I've been given, to share stories with people, to hopefully enlighten their lives and you think of it as more than just a job.

One of the things I tell educators in my education speech is that if you picked this profession because you needed a job, you're in big trouble. You can't just BE a teacher, you ARE a teacher, that's who you are, you're everything to these kids. It's probably harder on the spouse of a teacher than it is on a teacher, because they're faced with that dilemma, 'I'm married to somebody, and do they care more about the kids than they do about me?' You have to care.

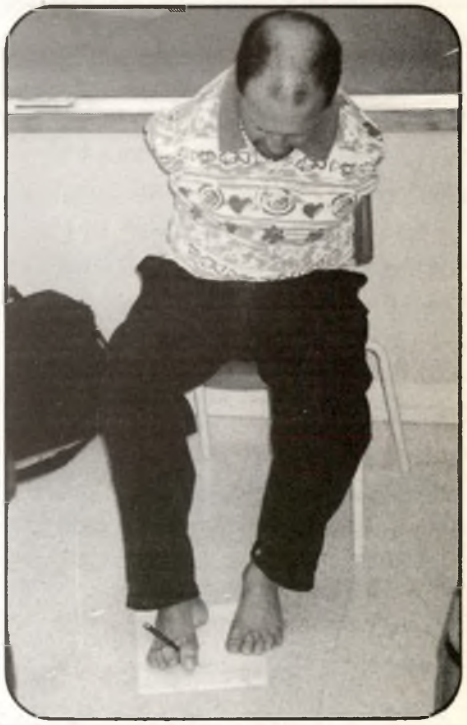
I carry that in my back pocket. I know that my family would rather have me home, but at the same time, my son has never known anything else but his father as a speaker. I met my current wife as a speaker. She manages the business. I see it in one respect as a means to a financial end, to running my own company and to make money and to have

the freedoms that are attached with that, but more than anything, and I try to explain this to my kid like my Dad did to me, if you don't get a good feeling everytime you do your life's work, then you need to find a different job. I've had times, sure, where I've felt lonely and depressed, unhappy with being away and the travelling, but in the end you look back and say, but I also remember about 15 years ago saying, oh, I would love to be able to do this all the time. You don't mess with that.

N: You are a musician, an athlete, a husband, a father, a celebrity of sorts. What is your next goal?

A.L.: Author, actually. I've had to quibble with this one a great deal. Like the transition from being a broadcaster to being a speaker, I think there is another natural transition that usually goes in the other direction, usually people are an author and then a speaker. I have always tempered everything with a certain amount of ego check. I have a big ego but I also have a lot of checks and balances there to keep me sane. One of them has always been the fight between just having this speaking thing, but also recognizing that if I write it down, then it's accessible to everybody, it doesn't just have to be where I come to a town or a community or a school. The other thing too, is that when it's written that hopefully one can then say, "Jeez, you should read this." And you're sharing it with someone else and if it becomes an assistance device for people for their attitudes for their own lives, then it goes further than just the one hour speech. As a writer you understand this. My being a quasi writer at this point, I have a difficult time coming to grips with how I want to put it. That's probably the worst part. I hasten the ego that goes with writing an autobiography and what kind of person you must be to consider yourself lofty enough to write it down.

At the same time, I also look at the other angle, and as corny as this sounds, if one person read it and felt like their life changed... did you read the book or see the movie the Hurricane about that boxer? As I was watching that movie, that's what got me. There is, in the middle of this whole story, and it's a remarkable story, this young black man who has his own problems, reading this book of the hurricane story and how it inspires him. I look at that and I



Alvin Law writing his way - with his feet

think, 'jeez, I have to write this book.' Maybe some young person out there that might pick up my book and not idolize me, that's not what it's about. It's about reading this book and going 'wow, you know, I've got this stuff happening in my life, I can rise above that.'

N: Something you said in your speech really touched me. It had to do with the fact that there are people in your life who make you feel good about who you are, and there are those that just make you feel bad. It's a simple choice, you choose to be with the people that make you feel good. If we could always just keep that in the back of our mind, our lives would be so different. It's nice to hear you say that.

A.L.: It's something that I lived through. I look back on my first marriage and I think that was a marriage of necessity about a child. And it happens everywhere in the world. We should respect that we somehow produce a child as a couple. There is an onus of responsibility, especially on the men, to be there for their part, too. But having said that, I also think that women, especially those who have the right motivation and love for their child, can do a far superior job raising a child on their own than being with the man just because that's what you do.

I look at that whole scenario in my own life, and not only was it my first marriage and not only did it change me in a negative way, but the friendships that we established with people, the likemindedness were mixed in with that. I have such clear image of sitting around our dining room table having coffee with our friends and doing nothing but bitch about people and society and life. How can that not affect you? We've all got a little thing that makes us get kind of anxious, annoyed or whatever, but I'd rather be at a table where you're sitting around talking about a wonderful thing, a beautiful experience.

N: It makes such simple sense, but I find most often people do the opposite, because it's something to talk about...

A.L.: Yeah, we're really good at criticizing people, aren't we, but we're not so good at taking it back in our face.

N: I have to ask you this. I know a lot of people who are obsessed with the show the X-Files, and I know you were on it. Tell me about it.

A.L.: The episode was done maybe five seasons ago, it was a show called 'Humbug.' It featured a gentleman by the name of Jim Rose who travels the world mostly on the fringe circuit with a thing called the human circus. He's just a wierd guy. He takes with him on the road a nineties or new millennium version of side show circus freaks. The writer of this episode had seen that show in LA, in some kind of bar, and he went back home and started writing this episode. He tied in the history of circus folklore and also was inspired by a documentary that was out a few years ago about a place called Gibsontown, which is a real life retirement community in Florida for circus freaks, primarily the Barnum & Bailey ones. So you can imagine pulling into this town and seeing all of these people that were ex-professionals in the circus, but of course in our politically correct time, we're not allowed to do that anymore. It was a really big deal to be a side show circus freak, and one of the facts is that people without arms found a place to work. They would do the side shows, they would use their feet to shoot guns, to use bows and arrows, they would do all these things that amazed and grossed people out at the same time. This writer of the X-Files decided to put this program together with the notion of somehow bringing in the FBI. So of course, the irony of this whole thing was that they could not find anywhere an armless actor. Even though there was a ton of them before, they couldn't find one.

They had seen me on a telethon I do in Vancouver for Variety Club. They, being the producers of the show, just happened to be watching and found me doing things with my feet, and they needed an armless preacher, there had to be this character in the script. The part was written into the script, it wasn't written for me, it was just there and they couldn't find the actor. They were actually going to go to the expense of digitally erasing, to take the arms away, like they did with Gary Sinise's legs in 'Forrest Gump.' But there I was.

So you can appreciate this, it is one of our favorite family stories that I don't go to great lengths to talk about in my speech, but my wife does not watch televison. She may watch the occasional show, but I'm the television guy. She'd never heard of X-Files, quite literally. So she gets a call at the office and the message is actually saying, "I'm wondering if this is the Alvin Law from the telethon. Would he be interested in being a preacher on an episode of X-Files." So she thought it was just some wacko from some fringe church asking me to come and do a sermon. She didn't understand, so when she called back she said, "Well, I'll have to talk to him, I don't know, he's pretty busy," and of course the people on the other end are thinking, hello, this is the X-Files, people would DIE to be on the X-Files! So I ended up doing it. It was one of those wierd things that happened. It was sort of my 15 minutes of fame. It was just a thing I did.

Alvin relaxed and content

N: Was it fun?
A.L.: It was ten hours, on your feet, acting! It was fun, but it was wierd. It was recognizing that this is a big budget production and there are 85 people standing around with cameras, lights and makeup and all of a sudden, you're the guy. I was the only speaking part up until, if you remember the episode, the guy comes out of the ground and hammers a spike into his chest as a tribute to the escape artist that had died. Anyway, everyone always asks, "What was it like meeting David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson?" Well, I started meeting celebrities when I was sixteen. And, really frankly, once you've met one, you've met them all. I did not get to know them enough to find out whether they were good or bad people, but you can tell that they were very much the Hollywood that we all imagined they would be. It was just one of those things where I'll be able to look back sometime in my life and say, there wasn't any real reason for doing that, I just did it.

N: You've travelled all over the world, had dinner with the Queen, been to the White House, met the Prime Ministers, what was the biggest thrill for you?
A.L.: Boy, that's a good question. I think it would be hard to pick something that gave me a real thrill.

N: Is it more the things and people that are closer to your heart, to your home that give you that?
A.L.: Yeah... but I enjoyed very much my first experiences in Australia. I'm not sure if everyone's built this way; but all I know is that I am built this way: my excitement for life comes when I am sharing that with somebody. When we can have a shared experience and we can say, "Wow, it was so cool that we did that." Those are the ones that come close to my heart. Having dinner with Queen Elizabeth was an occasion that would be viewed as rather remarkable, but it wasn't one that I went and told my friends about.

N: Were you afraid of doing something terribly impolite?
A.L.: Oh sure. I was actually bit irreverant back then too, and that probably caused me a bit of grief.

N: Did you pick your nose at the table?
A.L.: (laughing) No, I didn't do that! Good question though.
I think that at one point there may have been one or two experiences that I could have pointed out, but there's been so many of these extraordinary experiences that I keep thinking, well you know, how much more could anyone ask for. But at the same time, maybe that's the eerie trade off that comes from doing this. This is an interesting way to put it: I think that the whole dramatic change from what my lack of any expectations in life were when I was young to what it has become has been that package, that package of experiences, There wasn't one person that impressed me over the other or one experience that impressed me over another.
I think they all did, for whatever little thing they give you, and that's it. Every now and then you hear somebody say, what or who were your influences, was there someone special.

N: We meet certain people at different times in our lives for different reasons, often it's all coincidence, and we don't even realize it at the time.
A.L.: One other thing to add to that is that you have to be one of the believers in all of this karma thing about it and that is what I'm a believer in too.

N: Is this the first time you've been to a Cree community in Northern Quebec?
A.L.: I've never been North of Montreal. I've been to Cree communities in Saskatchewan.

N: Would you be interested in returning?
A.L.: Yes. If people want to contact me or send me any kind of information, that's fine.
This is where the book, or inevitably someday maybe even a tape of the speech, becomes available so that people can pass it on to someone else, that's great. We all know somebody who's having a rough time and who could use a little inspiration, and I'm not suggesting that I am the cure-all, but maybe one little element of an observation of life can give people a different angle, that's all I ask.

N: Do you have a favorite book?
A.L.: "Where the Wild Creatures Are." As a child, I'd read this book and say somewhere out in the world this is normal. Maybe that's how I felt as a little boy... that maybe someday I could get to a place in the world where I'm not unusual, I'm just like everybody else.

Thalidomide

"Lebanon, Charles de Gaulle, California Baseball, Starkweather Homicide, Children of Thalidomide"

The "children of thalidomide" in Billy Joel's song "***We Didn't Start the Fire***" were 10,000 babies born with shortened arms and legs or without any limbs at all. Their mothers had taken the drug thalidomide early in their pregnancies to help them sleep and to keep them from feeling nauseated.

Of the **10,000 babies** with "seal-like" limbs, only seventeen were born in the United States. The number was low because Dr. Frances Kelsey blocked the sale of the drug in the USA.

Now, some **thirty years later,** thalidomide has resurfaced. Doctors are investigating its potential as a treatment for a variety of diseases.

New Voting Rights For First Nation Members

On **November 20, 2000** the rules for voting will change.

As of this date, if you are a First Nation member regardless of whether you live on or off reserve, 18 years of age or older, you will have the right to vote in *Indian Act* elections and referendums held by your First Nation.

Why the Change?

The voting regulations will be changed because the Supreme Court of Canada, in the *Corbiere* decision, has struck down the existing *Indian Act* wording which restricts voting rights to members residing on reserve. The Supreme Court provided the Government of Canada with 18 months to complete the required changes by November 20, 2000.

What are the Changes?

Amendments to the regulations on the voting process in elections and referendums held under the *Indian Act* are available. The regulations are in the process of being finalized and will become effective on October 20, 2000, but will only apply to votes held on or after November 20, 2000.

How to Register to Vote?

To participate in the major decisions affecting your community, your First Nation or Band office needs to know how to contact you. To register to vote, it is important to provide your name and address to your Band office so that they may contact you prior to your Band's next election or referendum.

How Can I Find Out More?

For a copy of the draft regulations or more information, contact Indian and Northern Affairs Canada at:

- the nearest Regional office or
- Call 1 888 543-0004

Further information is available on the following website:

www.inac.gc.ca

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada | Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada

Canada

Geordie Productions arrives in James Bay...

by James Douglas.

Cast (L to R) Carrie Colak, Lindsay Pierre, Jacob Richmond (waving) with some of the kids from Maquatau Eeyou school, Wemindji. Sept 5th, 2000.

Many school children were treated to yet another theatrical performance right in their own schools this year by Montreal theatre company Geordie Productions. For the past 7 years or more, Geordie has been coming to the Cree communities here to perform professional productions of new Canadian plays Thanks entirely to The Cree school board. This year they took two productions. One aimed at the elementary school level, "How to be a perfect person in just three days" by Quebec playwright Gilles Gauthier is based on the novel by Stephane Manes. It tells the story of a young boy who learns that trying to become "perfect" may not be all that it's cracked up to be. Originally written in French, it has been translated and is now being performed in English throughout Eastern Canada. The second production, for the teen audience, was "Chasing the Money" by Vancouver playwright Dennis Foon. It deals with the problem of gambling and the fact that both adults and young people can be a victim of this addiction.

The actors, Lindsay Pierre, Carrie Colak, Jacob Richmond and myself, stage/tour manager James Douglas all travel to the communities in a touring van and fly to others courtesy of Air Creebec. First stop this year was Maquatau Eeyou School in Wemindji where we performed in the community hall. The children loved to come and knock on the door of the apartment after the show to ask for autographs and just to chat. At the restaurant, some children found it was fun to play with the actor Lindsay Pierre's hair. Next was the flight to Whapmagoostui-Great Whale and the Badabin Eeyou School. Here the actors were treated to a sight they rarely get to see, the northern lights. We were told that if they really wanted to see a show, we should return in the winter. We all decided that we want our own ATV's- "just to get around". We also took a stroll down to the beach and stuck our toes in just to be able to say we "stepped" into Hudson's bay. Actor Lindsay Pierre actually went to school with teacher Tanya Turnbull who is teaching 4th grade this year. In these communities, not accessible by road, we have to take the bare minimum of set and props. Whatever will fit in our luggage. Thanks to Emily Masty; she's always a great help.

After this came a weekend in Chisasibi and the performances at the James Bay Eeyou school. This school, having the largest population, got to see the show twice, as all the children could not be fitted in at one time. On the 9th Sept. the actors and myself were invited to drop into a wedding at the Arena and on the 10th we were delighted to share a traditional meal in a teepee cooked up by Chisasibi's own Linda Quachegan, Great Bannock! By the way, thanks to Sherman at Chisasibi Mandow Agency for the info.

From there we went to Wabannutao Eeyou School, Eastmain. Thanks to Dorothy Gilpin for the arrangements. Then the flight to Wiinibekuu School, Waskaganish. Thanks to Gertie Murdock and Ingrid. Finally Luke Mettaweskum School, Nemiscau- thanks Lindy for the accommodation. By the way, I discovered that you could fill up at 381, drive to Nemiscau and still make it into Matagami on one tank of gas!

Next month after the goose break our team will head up to O.J., Mistissini and Waswanipi to finish off that part of the tour. Looking forward to next year's visit!

By the way, we always like to receive mail so if anyone at the schools wants to write to us and tell us about the shows we'd be delighted! Draw us pictures too. You can reach us at Geordie Productions, 4001 rue Berri, Mtl, Que. H2L 4H2. Or by fax (514) 845-3634.

Class photo with the 4th Level at Badabin Eeyou School Whapmagoostui. Sept. 7th, 2000. Jacob Richmond (sitting left) Carrie Colak (sitting Front). Back row, Lindsay Pierre and Teacher Tanya Turnbull.

Lets Look to Eeyou Istchee
for Employment in Development

The traditional lands of the Eeyouch provided for our ancestors for thousands of years. We continue to occupy and derive our traditional sustenance from these lands. Since 1975 we have developed our communities and defended our rights. We have created the basis for Eeyou education, health, community and other services. We have also started many businesses that are employing an increasing number of our people. However, each year there are between 200 and 300 young Eeyouch who reach the age where they begin to seek employment. Our present rate of creating employment in the communities does not meet the needs of these people.

It is time that we go back onto our traditional lands to gain the benefits promised in the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement created by development on the Territory. Without our involvement in the benefits of development, Eeyou Istchee will be gradually alienated from us. We will always see development as development for the benefit of others from the south.

We have a right to participate in development!

The 1975 Treaty states:

"28.10.4 Quebec and Canada shall take all reasonable measures, including but not limited to regulations, to establish priority to available and duly qualified local persons or entrepreneurs in respect to contracts and employment created by development in the Territory."

This was the deal, the Eeyouch have a right to demand participation through contracts and employment. Moreover, the Quebec Government predicts that over the coming years more and more Quebecois will choose to live in the big cities in the south. They predict that the population of Northern Quebec, Region 10, will actually decrease over the next 40 years. But the Eeyou and Inuit populations are increasing! It is likely that over the coming years the Eeyouch and the Inuit will become very important in the Territorial workforce.

Today the Eeyouch are under-represented in the Territorial workforce. Of all of the somewhat over 5000 jobs created in the mining, hydroelectricity and forestry sectors, only about 160 or 3% have gone to Eeyouch while the Eeyouch are about 40% of the population in the Territory south of the 55th parallel, and increasing. The history of the development of the Territory has resulted in a systemic racial prejudice against the Eeyou people, despite the commitments of Canada and Quebec that this would not occur. Let's reverse this trend!

Only in this way will the Eeyouch manage to find full employment for the generations in the future and for those who cannot find employment in the communities at the present time.

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Fall hunt

BY XAVIER KATAQUAPIT

I have been driving all day long and, although it is September, today was warm and the sun followed me north. In southern Ontario the trees were just beginning to turn with shades of red, yellow and orange here and there. By the time I reached North Bay the roadside was ablaze in all the wonderful colours of fall. Further north the colour seemed to drain and mostly orange and yellow filled my eyes.

Where I come from, Attawapiskat on the James Bay coast, we don't get those magnificent red and orange colours in the fall. Most of the land on the James Bay coast is muskeg and the heavy treed areas are pine. However, we also have birch and popular, so yellow is a predominant colour in our autumn.

The big change for us for the coming of fall is the disappearance of the mosquitoes and black flies. If you have been in the far north in the summer months you know what I am talking about when I say we welcome the cold weather, as these insects leave us. Moving about the land in the spring and summer months is never easy with clouds of mosquitoes and black flies to deal with.

Another sign of fall in the James Bay coast has to do with the birds and the animals. The Canada geese, or Niska as we call them, begin to fly south in huge numbers. The departure of the goose is so profound for us Crees on the coast that we refer to the month of October as Oh-pay-mah-ah-moh-wee-pee-see-m, which means flying away month. This is traditionally the time of the year when all of communities on the James Bay coast become involved in the fall goose hunt. This is not as big a hunt as we have in the spring, when the geese return to James Bay, but it is still a big event for everyone.

This is our last chance to stock up on our supply of geese for the winter. My people have survived through the ages mostly due to the fact that there have always been geese to hunt. The goose means so much to the James Bay Crees. This bird is a part of who we are and is a spiritual connection to the mother earth.

While many people in the south wish for the warm days of summer we Crees look forward to the cooler days of fall. This is the time when it is easier to move across the land and the water and perfect for hunting, as moose and wild foul meat does not spoil so quickly. It is also much easier for us to move along our major roadways, which are the rivers and the lakes. The fall brings more rain and the waterways swell, which provides easier access in shallow places.

There is excitement in the communities along the coast this time of year as my people get ready to return to their traditional hunting grounds. Entire families are busy preparing the freighter canoes and putting together the necessary supplies and materials needed for a week to three weeks out on the land. In the old days this was the time of year that everyone left for their hunting grounds and didn't return until spring.

This is also the time of the year when most people in the community head out to gather dry grasses which they store away for spring when it is time to build goose blinds. If you are out on the Attawapiskat River or James Bay during the fall months you will notice a lot of traffic as families head back and forth between their traditional hunting grounds and the community.

It is at this time of year that I am reminded how special we James Bay Crees are with one foot in town and the modern world and the other in the traditions and culture that date back to the dawn of time. I wish all the hunters up the James Bay coast good luck in the Tah-Kwah-Kah-N Eh-Ah-Shi-Eh-Kah-Noh-K (fall hunt).

The Cree Nations presents "The Great Escape"

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FIRE PREVENTION WEEK - OCTOBER 8-14, 2000

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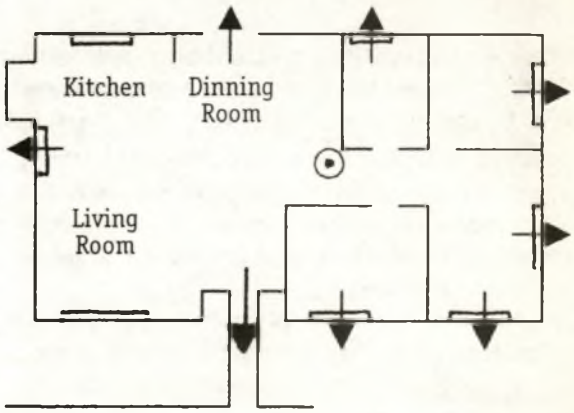

How to develop a fire escape plan

1. Install smoke alarms on each level of your home and test them regularly.

2. Draw a floor plan of your home showing all possible exits from each room as shown above.

3. Where possible, plan a main exit route and an alternative exit route from each room.

4. Make certain that everyone understands that if they hear the smoke alarm, or hear someone shouting "fire" they should immediately evacuate the home.

5. Decide on a meeting place outside your home. In case of fire, go to the meeting place. Call Fire Department.

CONTACT YOUR COMMUNITY REP. FOR MORE DETAILS

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1. Whapmagoostui	Contact: Josie George	(819) 929-3111
2. Chisasibi	Contact: Josie Cox	(819) 855-2444
3. Wemindji	Contact: Victor Blackned	(819) 978-3773
4. Eastmain	Contact: Henry Moses	(819) 977-2911 or 3080
5. Waskaganish	Contact: Ernest Blueboy	(819) 895-8720 or 2454
6. Nemaska	Contact: Matthew Wapachee	(819) 673-2442 or 2443
7. Mistissini	Contact: Matthew Gunner	(418) 923-3223
8. Ouje-Bougoumou	Contact: Mark Forsyth	(418) 745-2576
9. Waswanipi	Contact: Bobby Blacksmith	(819) 753-2521

Hup, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six

By Lance Blacksmith

Six members of the Cree Nation were among the 25 Aboriginal candidates who graduated from the three-week Canadian Armed Forces Pre-Recruit Training Course (PRTC) on Friday, September 22, at the Canadian Forces Leadership and Recruit School in St-Jean, Que.

Richard and Jonathan Cheezo of Eastmain, Willard Hester and Stephanie Jonah of Waskaganish, Liette Neacappo of Chisasibi, and Isaac Petagumskum of Whapmagoostui successfully completed the three-week PRTC.

In fact, both Stephanie Jonah and Isaac Petagumskum have enrolled as members of the CF, along with seven other coursemates, during the graduation ceremony.

Jonah will join the navy as a Steward, and Petagumskum will join the army as an Infantry Soldier.

Lieutenant-General Christian Couture, Assistant Deputy Minister Human Resources (Military) and reviewing officer at the PRTC graduation parade congratulated the graduates and said "You represent the future of the Canadian Forces...you should be very, very proud of what you have accomplished."

Jonah, Petagumskum and most of the other candidates who enrolled at the PRTC graduation parade will start the Basic Recruit Training course at the Canadian Forces Leadership and Recruit School in St-Jean, Quebec, on October 10.

The PRTC is part of the Canadian Forces Aboriginal Entry Program (CFAEP), a program offered to Aboriginal persons across Canada to give them the opportunity to explore military careers before making a commitment to join the CF.

Richard Cheezo agreed this course was a good way to start. He said "I always wanted to find out what the army was like. I wanted to see if I could succeed and test my limits. I guess I was also looking for a new challenge in life."

The course proved to be challenging, exciting and revealing, as the students learned about themselves, teamwork and the possibility of joining the Canadian Armed Forces. Richard Cheezo said that he is thinking of going back to take basic training next year and making the Armed Forces his career.

The PRTC provides instruction in basic military skills (uniform and equipment maintenance, rank structure, drill and topography), introduction to CF policies, first aid, Aboriginal history, life skills, stress management, physical fitness and other areas.

"It was great," said Johnathon Cheezo. "I feel good about myself and I proved that I can accomplish anything if I put my mind to it." The course also provides a three-week transition period to allow the Aboriginal candidates to adapt from their culture and community to the new, and significantly different, military culture. Johnathon Cheezo said that as a youth he learnt many things and lived Tim Allan's words when Allan said "never give up, never surrender."

If your interested in seeing what the Armed Forces is all about or want more information contact Lieutenant Vance White, Canadian Forces Recruiting Group Public Affairs Officer, at (705) 424-1200 ext. 2313.

Burnt Church: Learn from us

by Debra McNutt, Andrew Gokee and Zoltan Grossman

We in Wisconsin have been following the Mi'kmaq treaty conflict at Burnt Church, N.B., very closely. The Maritimes dispute has close echoes of the intense conflict over Chippewa (Ojibwa) spearfishing in northern Wisconsin in the late 1980s and early 1990s. If you substitute "walleye" for "lobsters" it all sounds regrettably familiar.

There are 861 lakes in Wisconsin where the highly prized walleyed pike spawn in the territory the

Chippewa ceded to the American government in the 19th century — roughly the northern third of the state.

Sport fishermen take much of the catch and that's a major source of the regional economy. After a 1983 federal court decision upholding Ojibwa rights to fish for walleye in traditional fishing grounds before the sport season opened, there was outrage among non-natives.

Militant anti-treaty groups began to carry signs reading "Spear an Indian — Save a Walleye." Some state political leaders inflamed public opinion with their claim that the Ojibwa (who never took more than 3 per cent of the walleye) would "rape" the fishery, and they tried, unsuccessfully, to divide Ojibwa bands from each other.

Throughout the late 1980s Wisconsin anti-treaty mobs committed numerous acts of violence — including rock-throwing, swamping of Ojibwa boats, death threats, and pipe bombings. Riot-clad police and National Guard helicopters were deployed at the lakes, and Witnesses for Nonviolence monitored harassment of Ojibwa spearfishers and their families. A federal court injunction eventually prevented anti-Indian groups from harassing Ojibwa as they were merely exercising their rights.

The major difference between Wisconsin and New Brunswick is that here in the States it was the anti-Indian citizen or vigilante groups that swamped the native boats and threatened fishermen's lives. At Burnt Church it has seemed that the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans has taken on this role. Seeing the DFO's actions on our TV has seriously undermined many Americans' image of Canada as a "peaceful" and "inclusive" society — an image that we value as a counterpoint to our sometimes violent and intolerant society.

The environmentalist facade of Wisconsin anti-treaty groups fell away in the early 1990s when mining companies such as Noranda and Rio Algom started coming into the north woods looking for metallic sulfide minerals. This type of mining can release sulfuric acid into trout streams. For a while, the anti-treaty groups still chose to blame the Ojibwa for all rural environmental and economic problems. But many other non-Indian fishing groups began to get wise. They made an effort to understand the history of the treaties, the tribal respect for the environment, and the threat that metallic sulfide mines would pose to fishing by natives and non-natives alike.

These fishing groups and the tribes began to realize that instead of arguing over the fish, they could come together to protect the fish from a common outside threat. Today, Wisconsin has a strong inter-ethnic alliance of tribes, fishing groups, and environmentalists opposed to metallic sulfide mining, particularly Rio Algom's proposed Crandon mine next to the Mole Lake Ojibwe Reservation. The alliance has won some victories to protect the fisheries by throwing the mining companies out of Wisconsin.

Just as, in Wisconsin, anti-treaty groups focused more attention on the Ojibwa than on the mining companies, the DFO focuses more attention on lobster harvested by one Mi'kmaq band than on the numerous environmental threats to the entire North Atlantic ecology. We trust that the people of the Maritimes and the rest of Canada will also get wise to this new anti-aboriginal campaign as a diversion from the real environmental problems facing marine life. After all, they face human beings of all nationalities.

Just as Wisconsin state officials attempted to "lease" treaty rights from Ojibwa bands, provincial and federal officials hope that all Mi'kmaq bands will sign away their rights in return for peace. But peace is shortlived in

the absence of justice. Isolating or criminalizing aboriginal leaders only divides and destabilizes aboriginal bands, and undermines chances for peace. Besides, in Wisconsin, yesterday's tribal "renegades" have become today's respected tribal government leaders. And the Ojibwa can finally fish in peace.

Wisconsin Indians and rural whites have found they had more in common with each other than they had with government or corporate officials. Now the neighboring communities of the Maritimes need to search for local solutions without outside interference or manipulation. Scapegoating the First Nations lobster fishermen does not address the sources of the economic crisis affecting all fishing people in the region.

Fisheries Minister Herb Dhaliwal has only exacerbated a physical conflict between two communities that are both going through hard times; in our view, he should resign.

The assertion of Wisconsin Ojibwa treaty rights in the short term created conflict between natives and non-natives, but in the long term it helped to build cultural understanding, economic cooperation, and a common environmental identity. The treaties became a key legal tool to protect natural resources, and reservation sovereignty became a political lever to gain economic development for natives and non-natives alike.

The Mi'kmaq are able to get their perspective heard, and people around the world concerned about human and sovereign rights are listening. Here in the States we join the many voices urging a peaceful resolution of the tense situation in Burnt Church and the rest of the Maritimes, and an honourable recognition of Mi'kmaq treaty rights.

Relaxing at Osprey by Will Nicholls

I never got a chance to see one while I was there but I knew there had to be an osprey flying around somewhere. The place was just too perfect not to have one. Osprey Camp is the most peaceful place I've ever been in a long time. You can see white caps on the lake but none of rough weather affects the nestled bay where the camp is situated.

I went up with Gazette columnist Lyle Stewart to do a story on the camp. We had flown up the last time Lyle came to Mistissini with me. It was time to show the boy the largest natural lake from the water. Hell, it was time I saw the lake from the water up myself. I almost forget the last time I was up on the big part of the lake, myself. We hitched a ride on the supply boat. Osprey Camp is growing and materials were needed for two more cabins. It was a pleasant surprise to see the King aka Kenny Longchap waiting for us at the dock. Kenny was our guide when we went to another Mistissini outfitters camp on the Papas a while back and he would be our driver to Osprey. Things have a way of coming full circle in the north it seems.

Osprey was a beautiful camp with the sounds of wind in the trees. A comfortable and welcoming breeze, the kind that puts you to sleep gently at nights.

But first, the fishing, always the fishing. We went across to the eastern side for a little walleye fishing. Lyle caught our supper easily and it was time to head back with what would become our breakfast. With the waves picking up I was glad our boats could handle the weather. They were a new variety all the way from Canada's most western province of B.C. The ride was comfortable thanks to Norman , our guide.

The log cabin was great. Able to sleep four, the cabin boasted a fridge, stove and even a barbeque on the porch. If you needed to go to the washroom I can tell you that Osprey had the best toilet of any camp I have ever had the pleasure of visiting. A short walk from the cabin brought you to toilets that were clean and even had a potpourri to create a lovely scent masking whatever smells you may add. There are showers and that for your comfort. Speaking of comfort, the beds were wonderful and there were propane lamps in every room in the cabins.

The lamps brightened up an evening of cribbage with the guides. I won't say who lost but Lyle and myself managed to skunk the other two teams during the evening. In between the cribbage rounds we lost I would venture outside. The sky was clear and there were more stars than you could shake a stick at. It's a sight you don't see in towns or cities, as the surrounding lights tend to drown them out. Not up here. It was clear and you could see for thousands of light-years. I even got to see a couple of falling stars. I quickly wished for some good fishing in the morning. In the morning we headed to the Rupert River. The Rupert has the distinction of being one of the oldest inland fur routes used by the Hudson Bay. It also has the well-deserved reputation of being good for speckled and lake trout, walleye and pike.

It had been a while since I had fished this area of the lake. The Rupert is a winding river that seems to be everywhere at once. Going there without a guide if you don't know the area would be suicide. There are shoals that extend out on seemingly improbable angles creating mini-rapids that the Speckled Trout love so well.

Our guide confided to us he caught a five-pound Speckle in the area where we were fishing. Our luck that day wasn't as good as his or the 28-pound Laker a guest had caught the week before. But it didn't matter.

What mattered was the great time we had relaxing on Lake Mistassini compliments of Osprey Outfitters.

You can always tell when someone has a great camp when other Crees use it. During our stay some guests from Mistissini arrived. It was Darren MacLeod, my cousin, his girlfriend and her parents. The Grand Council/ Cree Regional Authority had a meeting/fishing trip up there for September. It's always good to see Crees supporting Cree businesses but in this case I feel that it says far more about Osprey then I could. Plan Osprey for your next fishing adventure. It's well worth the time.

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100 – Births

We would like to congratulate Robert and Mary on the safe arrival of their baby girl Angel Helen born September 8 at 3:20 am, weighing 8 pounds 7 _ oz You truly are a blessing and we love you very much!!! With lots of love, Grandma, Stephanie and Frances. P.S. Don't grow up too fast!!! XOXOXOX

We would like to congratulate my cousin Cheryl Wapachee and Jeremy Diamond on the birth of their new baby boy born on Sept.9, 2000 in Chibougamau. Take care of your little boy. Love: Christina and boys. xoxo.

101 – Birthdays

I want to wish happy birthday to my friend Janice Moar (in Wask.) on Oct.19. Hope you'll get a chance to be with your friends on your birthday, so we can party! Anyways, with us or over at camp 257, have fun and keep on washing the floor! (Just kidding!) From your friend, Barbs.

Happy Birthday to my niece a friend Cheryl Hester (Oct.11) and to her husband Leonard (Leo) Whiskeychan (Oct.7) hope you both have fun on your birthdays and I hope you'll get all that you wished for. Again, have fun. Love ya! From Barbs

I want to wish a happy **Birthday to my** good-looking nephew Kevin Lyle Nicolas Gordie Moses on Oct. 1st. I just wanted to tell you how much I love you and hope you'll have a fun time on your birthday and have all the coke you want (That's if it's okay with your mom!) Love, your auntie Barbs.

Happy Birthday to my special nieces in Waskaganish, Corina Hest (Oct 3), Marena Jacob (Oct. 8), Jocelyne and Betty Blueboy (Oct. 18) (Jocelyne who is still in Dixvill, I wish you were here, though I don't admit it to others. I miss you so much and you are always in my thoughts and my heart. I love you very much Jose!) and all you girls what can I say that I haven't said before. Just have fun on your birthday ...have fun and don't let anyone ruin it for you. Love you girls! Love always your Auntie Barbs

On October 21st my sister will celebrate her?? Birthday. Happy Birthday Flo! And many more to come. Did you know it's okay to add a little you know what to your celebration again? Happy Birthday and have fun. Love, your sister, Barbs.

Happy birthday to Elisabeth Kitishimik on Sept. 15, 2000 and many more to come. From Whapmagoostui post office. Keep up the good work!

We would like to wish a HAPPY BIRTHDAY to someone very special to us, Johnny Moar. His birthday is on Sept. 17. We just wanted to say Happy Birthday and we love you very much! Love always, Christina and your son Nehemia Cooper. And also to my brother Allen Cooper on Sept. 10. I love you bro!!

Happy 8th birthday to Victor Rupert on Oct.10, 2000. And to Georgina Happy 5th birthday on Oct.25, 2000. Happy birthday and many many more to come.

Love from Grandma and Grandpa Daniel and Dorothy Mataham

Happy 15th birthday to Pearl Mataham on Aug. 19, 2000. and Marie-Ann Rupert Happy 4th birthday on Aug 20, 2000 and Marie-Ann Rupert Happy 4th birthday on Aug. 20 –2000 and Ernie Mataham, Happy 13th birthday on Sept. 29, 2000. Happy birthday and many more to come. Love from Grandma and Grandpa, Dorothy and Daniel Mataham

Happy birthday to our daughter-in-law Loretta Mataham on Sept 4, 2000. We love you very much. From Dorothy and Daniel Mataham

Happy Birthday to Kenny Louttit on Sept.15, 2000. Happy Birthday and many more to come and also Happy first birthday to Emma-Rose Hester on Sept. 16, 2000. Happy birthday and many more to come. From Dorothy Mataham

We would like to wish a Happy 1st belated Birthday to Brittany Pelletier on July 28, 2000. Hope your birthday was lots of fun and filled with lots of love. P.S. We love you so much! With love, Stephanie and Frances XOXOXOXO

I would like to wish my very special son Adam Felix Mamianskum a very Happy 1st Birthday on October 7, 2000. Wish you all the best and many more to come. I love you very much, Adamie. From: Mommy Jeannie

Birthday wishes going out to my sisters, Pamela on Oct. 5 and Angela on Oct. 29, 2000. I love you girls!!! Love, Jeannie. XOX (Whapmagoostui)

I would like to wish my buddy Marcus Menarick, a Happy 1st Birthday on October 11, 2000. Have a great time and don't forget to invite me to your 1st Birthday party. For sure I won't forget you. Take care, Pal. From: Your good buddy, Adam Felix (Whapmagoostui)

I want to wish my cousin

CLASSIFIEDS

Stephanie Rupert a happy 16th Birthday on Oct. 8, 2000. Enjoy your special day and I'll treat you something that you'll enjoy very much. Wish you the best and many more to come. From: Jeannie M. (Whapmagoostui)

Mary M. Voyageur, another year older, soon you will be due for dentures and reading glasses (Ha). Have fun on your birthday. Mary, let me tell you something, the secret of staying young is to live honestly, eat slowly and lie about your age (Ha). Do you believe that? Happy birthday, and many more to come. From a friend in Montreal, guess who? Oops, almost forgot to mention the birth date, it's September 24, as you can see, I'm getting old, too, I keep forgetting things.

I would like to wish Happy Birthday to Frankie Shecapio. I don't know where you are right now, but I think about you and hope you do, too. I remember the good time we had. Take care. From someone in Mtl. (Your Secret Admirer)

Happy 3rd birthday to Crystal A. Hester Diamond on September 21. Po I wish I could celebrate with you on North Bay. I love you and I miss you so much. Hope your day will be extra special as you are. P.S. I miss you to jack, nothing is the same without you guys. from: La La (Wask.)

A very big Happy September Birthdays to my dad, Morley Etapp on Sept.16 in Mistissini???Or Gagnon?? My sister Angela E. Hester on the 23rd and my Brother in law Barry Blackned on the 30th in Waskaganish. Please hug my your little ones for me, I miss them so much!! See you all next weekend. From, Rachel

Isaac, I hope you're not embarrassed by this. It's just that you're special to me and,to show you how special, I'm going to say something to you that I've never said to anyone else in the entire world - ever! Wanna share my dog? Happy Belated Birthday Isaac on September 20, 2000 Love Serenitee

102 – Weddings

Congratulations to Charlotte Blacksmith and Larry Shecapio who got married on September 15 / 2000. I hope that you two keep falling in love over and over again. May your marriage be, for the both of you... A Lifetime filled with dreams come true and everything you both wished for. Charlotte I am very happy for you and I apologize for not showing up one of the happiest days of your life. Forever yours in Friendship Cynthia Blackned

Congratulations! To Nadia Petewabano and Gary Blacksmith who got married on August 25/2000. Wishing you happy hearts with so much Love, happiness and Joy, A happy home and a very happy marriage. Nadia I am happy for you and I wish nothing but the very best in life. I am sorry I didn't show up on your wedding day. Forever yours in Friendship Cynthia Blackned.

Congratulations to Charlotte Blacksmith and Larry Shecapio who got married on September 15 / 2000. I hope that you two keep falling in love over and over again. May your marriage be, for the both of you...a Lifetime filled with dreams come true and everything you both wished for. Charlotte I am very happy for you and I apologize for not showing up one of the happiest days of your life. Forever yours in Friendship Cynthia Blackned

103 – Anniversaries

Happy Belated 11th Anniversary to Robert and Mary on September 1st. We wish you both many more happy years together. We hope you enjoyed your anniversaryl. It was a special anniversary on week later Angel Helen was born Love, Mom, Stephanie and Frances.

Happy 5th anniversary to Bert and Loretta Mataham on Oct.20, 2000. May you have a long lifetime of happiness together. Love from Mom and Dad, Dorothy and Daniel Mataham

105 – Obituaries

On April 2, '99 U was totally in shock when my friend Randy Wapachee passed away. Losing a friend hurts. I knew him as a buddy. He was very open and we never got angry at each other. I never thought he'd leave early. This big world surrounds me! I'll miss his smiles, laughter and we always has a time too...over goose break, fishing and trapping, hunting season. In closing I'll always remember the friendship we used to have and our communication is important said myself to him.I thank God for people have spoken to me I know this message to all the people/friends in our community will be touched in their hearts.

300 Personals

I would like to say Hi to Barbara D. Hester Diamond in North Bay, Ont. I sure miss you a lot. Each and everyday is not the same without you. Good luck! with your studies or whatever you do in college. I'll be thinking about you and take care of po (crystalsh) P.S. Hi Jasmine take care girl. From: D.D. (Wask.)

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